

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STATE OF UTAH

REPRESENTATIVE  
CHRISTINE PACER WATKINS  
MINORITY CAUCUS MANAGER

DISTRICT 69  
CARBON, EMERY, GARFIELD,  
GRAND, SAN JUAN AND  
WAYNE COUNTIES

August 23, 2011



1548 E. 5700 S.  
PRICE, UTAH 84501  
CELL (435) 650-1969  
E-Mail: cwatkins@utah.gov

Ms. Marlene Dortch  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 Twelfth Street, Southwest  
Washington, DC 20554

RE: AT&T and T-Mobile's proposed merger, WT Proceeding No. 11-65

Dear Commissioners:

As a Utah State Legislator from a rural district, I have followed with interest the developments surrounding broadband access for rural America. In particular I have been monitoring the proposed AT&T/T-Mobile merger, as there are indications it would result in significant expansion of coverage in underserved areas like ours.

I am told that use of "smartphones" and tablets is growing such that they may soon make up over half of the market here in the U.S. It is clear that commerce, education, information and even health care are migrating more and more to these new platforms. That is fine, unless you live in an area of this nation that is woefully underserved by wireless broadband.

Part of my job as an elected representative is to see to it that the constituents in my district enjoy the same advantages and opportunities that are available in other parts of Utah. Sadly, that is not the case at this time when it comes to widely available, high-speed wireless broadband. Given our current federal budget battles, I seriously doubt government will be bridging this growing divide anytime soon. It appears to me that this proposed merger has the potential to be a major step forward in this arena, one that could mean jobs and development opportunities for my constituents.

I understand that whenever two large companies seek to merge, controversy is sure to come along. I also understand that the Commission will have to weigh the pros and cons and seek to protect the integrity of the market. But I hope kneejerk opposition and emotional arguments will not block our way to greater access to wireless broadband. Carbon, Grand, San Juan and Emery counties in Utah simply cannot afford to be left behind in this wave of wireless communication and data transmission. Please approve this merger as soon as possible.

Very Sincerely,

*Christine J. Watkins*

CC:  
Chairman Julius Genachowski  
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn  
Commissioner Michael Capps  
Commissioner Robert McDowell